

In the Claims

The claims have been amended to read as follows:

9. (once amended) A method for carrying out a chemical transformation, the method comprising contacting a reaction substrate and gel beads in the presence of a non-aqueous solvent for a time sufficient to convert at least a portion of the substrate to a product, in which:

A² the gel beads comprise a hydrocolloid and an enzymatically effective amount of an immobilized enzyme;

the gel beads have a network structure capable of swelling in aqueous media and an average particle size of about 5 microns to 150 microns in diameter; and

the gel beads are substantially insoluble in the non-aqueous solvent.

20. (once amended) Gel beads comprising a hydrocolloid and an enzymatically effective amount of an immobilized enzyme,

the gel beads prepared by a process comprising:

A³ (a) forming dehydrated hydrocolloid gel beads, the gel beads having a network structure capable of swelling in aqueous media and an average particle size of about 5 microns to 150 microns in diameter; and

(b) imbining into the dehydrated hydrocolloid gel beads an aqueous solution of the enzyme.

27. (once amended) A method for carrying out a chemical transformation, the method comprising contacting a reaction substrate and gel beads in the presence of a non-aqueous solvent for a time sufficient to convert at least a portion of the substrate to a product,

in which:

A⁴ the gel beads comprise a hydrocolloid and an enzymatically effective amount of an immobilized enzyme;